

Current Articles & Research Resources, May 23

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In this weekly post, we feature helpful research tools and recent articles of interest to the legislative community.

- Consider aspects of today's [news media](#). (RAND Corporation Foundation, ©2019)
- Examine how [civil liability](#) could affect how cyberbullying is addressed in the legal system. (*UC Irvine Law Review*, last revised May 7, 2019)
- Read about the costs to state and local governments of accommdating [asylum-seekers](#) from Central America. (Stateline, May 17, 2019)
- Find the latest information on [drought](#) status in Texas. (Texas Commission on Environmental Quality, updated on May 10, 2019)

Members of the Texas legislative community may request the articles below [here](#) or by calling 512-463-1252.

- "Was Texas tort reform necessary? An update on the judges' view of jury verdict accuracy." By Elizabeth M Fraley, James Wren and Bradley J. B. Toben. *Baylor Law Review*, Winter 2019, pp. 168-189. (Note length)
Examines the necessity of tort reform through a survey of state court trial judges. Finds surveyed judges believe jury verdicts on compensatory damages are more likely to be disproportionately low, civil lawsuits are rarely frivolous, and additional legislation limiting exemplary damages is not needed.
- "Do they make too much?" By Phil Taylor. *Christian Science Monitor*, May 13, 2019, pp. 23-28.
Considers the explosion in sports salaries. Examines the history of professional athlete salaries and their meaning in terms of economics and the social value of athletes.
- "At Texas State, free-speech conflict proves needless." By Katherine Mangan. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, April 26, 2019, p. A30.
Explains a recent vote to ban a conservative student organization by Texas State University student government was mischaracterized as an official action by the university. Discusses the connection of this event to [SB18](#), 86th Legislature.
- "Where Democratic candidates stand on free college." By Terry Nguyen. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, May 10, 2019, p. A28.
Summarizes the views on free college of Democratic candidates seeking the presidential nomination. Includes quotes from each candidate expressing their stance.
- "Abortion laws: Alabama shakes." *Economist*, May 18th-24th, 2019, pp. 20-21.
Considers the likelihood that conservative states' passage of "heartbeat" bills banning abortion will lead to a legal case that can be used to overturn *Roe v. Wade*.
- "Retired teachers struggle to get by." By Madeline Will. *Education Week*, May 1, 2019, pp. 1, 13.
Reports retired teachers have reached their breaking point due to stagnant wages

and increased health insurance deductibles and premiums. Discusses lawmakers' efforts to remedy the financial hardships of retirees in Oklahoma, Indiana, and Texas.

- "Confronting the burden of fines and fees on fine-only offenses of Texas: Recent reforms and next steps." By Haley Holik and Marc Levin. *Internet Resource*, April 30, 2019, pp. 21-22.
Analyzes policies and legislation, [SB1913](#) and [HB351](#), 85th Legislature, related to the imposition and collection of fines and court costs for fine-only offenses. Provides recommendations for improving the current law and increasing the use of alternatives to incarceration for individuals who are unable to afford fines and fees.
- "Tangled up in side effects: Why work requirements for health care is bad medicine for everyone." By Simon F. Haeder. *Milken Institute Review*, Second Quarter 2019, pp. 53-58, 60-61.
Criticizes the policy development of Medicaid work requirements and discusses the experiences of Kentucky and Arkansas in implementing work requirements.
- "The drug war's hidden foster care crisis." By C.J. Ciaramella. *Reason*, June 2019, p. 10.
Discusses the correlation between increases in children placed in foster care and the rise in opioid addiction.
- "Family welfare caps lose favor in more states." By Teresa Wiltz. *Stateline* (Pew Charitable Trusts), May 3, 2019, pp. 1-5.
Comments on recent state legislative efforts to repeal family welfare caps which deny welfare benefits to families that have additional children while on public assistance. Points out the connection between family cap rules and poverty.
- "'Public education isn't somebody else's issue.'" By Robert White. *Texas Lone Star* (Texas Association of School Boards), May 2019, pp. 8-13.
Chronicles the Texas Tribune's recent symposium on the future of public education in Texas. Discusses public education and the workforce, school accountability, and efforts by the 86th Legislature to address the needs of public schools. Quotes Senator Royce West and Representative Diego Bernal.
- "A leap of faith: Questioning the Constitutionality of Texas's legislative prayer practice." By Amanda Voeller. *Texas Tech Law Review*, Winter 2019, pp. 305-332. (Note length)
Summarizes the tests courts use to evaluate violations of the Establishment Clause and the existing case law related to legislative prayer. Evaluates whether the Texas Legislature's prayer practice would withstand a court's test of the Establishment Clause.

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